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University of Rhode Island Faculty Senate, "FSEC Minutes February 18, 2014" (2014). *Faculty Senate Executive Committee Agendas and Minutes*. Paper 135.

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Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes #27

February 18, 2014

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:36AM on Tuesday, February 18, 2014 in the Dorothy Vocino Conference Room in the URI Library, Vice Chairperson Rice presiding. Senators Brady, Cerbo, Davis, and Nassersharif were present. Chairperson Byrd was absent.

2. There were no minutes for approval.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS/CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS

a. Vice Chairperson Rice summarized the Senate leadership meeting of Feb. 12th with the Provost. The Provost discussed ongoing plans for the Center for Teaching and Learning, a restructuring of existing offices (Assessment Office, Instructional Development Program, Online and Distance Education, Media and Technology Services). Chairperson Byrd and Vice Chairperson Rice presented the Provost with a draft of proposed changes to the University Manual sections pertaining to Administrator Evaluation. The Provost suggested allowing the evaluation process for the year to be completed and assessed by the Executive Committee before making language changes in the Manual. The Provost deferred feedback on the process while his performance was undergoing review.

b. Vice Chairperson Rice reported on his meeting with Attorney William C. Maaia, Chair of the Board of Education Personnel Committee. He explained the role of the Faculty Senate at the University, outlined the process of evaluation of administrators including the President, and asked Mr. Maaia if a report from the Senate would be of value to his committee's process. Chairperson Rice was asked to prepare a written summary of the information that he had shared with Mr. Maaia for him, Mr. Maaia, to share with the other members of the Personnel Committee.

c. Concern about new language in pending state legislation defining the new organizational structure of the Board of Education was discussed. President Dooley had contacted Chairperson Byrd on Feb. 13 to inform him that he would like to postpone signing URI Senate Bill 13-14--13 (Report to the Faculty Senate of the Constitution, By-Laws and University Manual Committee) because of potential implications related to the Bills H7133 and S2265 in the RI General Assembly. President Dooley, Professor Wenisch (Chair, Constitution, By-Laws and University Manual Committee) and Ms. Neff met on Feb. 14th to discuss the concerns. The President was concerned about language giving the President of the University additional powers:

In S2265, SECTION 2. Chapter 16-32 of the General Laws entitled "University of Rhode Island" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

16-32-2.1. Additional powers of the President of the University.--In addition to any powers granted to the president of the University of Rhode Island by law or regulation, the president shall have the following additional powers and duties: (a) To create, and consolidate departments, divisions, programs, and courses of study within the university with the assistance of the commissioner of postsecondary education within the approved role and scope adopted by the council on postsecondary education pursuant to Â§ 16-9 59-4. Any new or proposed eliminations of departments, divisions, programs or courses of study that are outside the role and scope approved by the council shall require the review and approval of the council on postsecondary education.

The President formally requested a 30-day extension on signing Bill #13-14--13. Chairperson Byrd granted the extension on behalf of the Executive Committee. The President suggested a follow-up meeting with the Provost, the Senate Executive Committee, and Professor Wenisch to discuss how to move forward with appropriate Manual language that continues the tradition of shared governance at URI. The President's Office is coordinating a meeting time.

d. The FSEC reviewed the agenda for of the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting, scheduled for February 23rd. It was noted that the Nominating Committee was still trying to identify Senators who are willing to run for office (Chair and Vice Chair).

e. Ms. Neff reported that the position of Specialist in the Faculty Senate Office had been offered to Ms. Joanne Lawrence. Human Resources had approved the offer and Ms. Lawrence was scheduled to start on March 10th.

4. ONGOING BUSINESS

a. The FSEC discussed the significant efforts made in 2012-13 to consider revisions to section 4.70.10 of the University Manual, The Graduate Faculty. These efforts and the many deliberations surrounding them did not yield changes that were satisfactory to both the Graduate School, who initiated the action, and the Faculty Senate. Efforts to meet with the Graduate School in Summer 2013 were not successful. The FSEC had tabled the subject in October 2013. The Dean of the Graduate School has asked to meet informally with the Senate Chair and Vice Chair. Ms. Neff was asked to locate and distribute the prior correspondence and Executive Committee recommendations on the issue.

b. The FSEC discussed the divisional reorganizations being proposed for the university. The committee expressed concern about the hiring of administrators at the expense of program quality and the hiring of faculty.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. On the subject of carrying out an audit of standing and joint committees to assess their effectiveness, Vice Chairperson Rice suggested asking committee chairs for year-end evaluations of their committees and their work. The perspectives of the Chairs would offer a starting point.

b. Expanding Senate membership of the Senate to non-continuing faculty was discussed briefly. The FSEC shared concern for the impact on the role of full-time, tenured faculty as well as on non-continuing faculty whose contracts do not stipulate service to the university.

c. A new location for Senate meetings was discussed. Although there are meeting spaces on campus that offer more sophisticated technology, the centrality of the Kirk Building is an advantage. The Senators should be polled for their interest in a new location.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Neff